Social digest

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OCIAL ACTION DIGEST (published monthly by the Institute of Social Order, Loyola University, New Orleans 18, La.) pre-
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GREETINGS FOR 1959

Today, more than ever before, there is a pressing need for well-informed men and women able and willing to stand up for their principles, capable of leading others with their dynamic ideas. SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST will continue to offer you thought-provoking facts and analyses of modern socio-economic problems. During 1959, SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST will cooperate with the current inquiry program of the Christian Family Movement by featuring background material on "Family Life and Economics."

Almost 500 new readers have joined us during the past few weeks, most of them upon the recommendation of friends. SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST welcomes the new subscribers and wishes all of you, old and new friends, a happy 1959.

The Editor.

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NEW POPE HOLDS COLLABORATION WITH MARXISTS CAN BE "FATAL"

Collaboration with Marxists on the pursuit of social reform can prove "fatal", His Holiness Pope John XXIII has declared. In a pastoral letter to the people of Venice in August 1956, the then Cardinal Roncalli condemned the attitude that social justice can only be achieved by working "with those who disown God, and the oppressors of human freedoms."

The Cardinal Patriarch of Venice then called on his people to take a strong stand against the so-called "opening to the left": "This constitutes a serious mistake and a flagrant violation of Catholic discipline. The mistake is that of practically sharing the Marxist ideology which is the negation of Christianity. The violation of discipline lies in openly disobeying the living Church. Let it not be said that this move toward the left means only more solicitous and vaster reforms of an economic nature, because even this is questionable. The people might be misled by the deceptive axiom that to carry out social justice, to help the poor of all classes and to impose respect for taxation laws, one must absolutely associate himself with those who disown God and the oppressors of human freedoms, and even submit to their own capricious will. This attitude is wrong in its premise and fatal in its application."

SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST (published monthly, except July and August) presents excerpts of articles and speeches by leading experts on modern socio-economic problems to stimulate intelligent discussions and promote ACTION to strengthen the ideals of freedom in a democratic society and the private enterprise system.

Subscription: $1.00 a year. — Please, show SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST to your friends.

WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE (Part 2)

The U.S. has become "the land of the working wives". The hand that rocks the cradle often punches a typewriter a year or two later. About 1 of every 3 mothers with children under 18 years of age is working. The following statistical data are excerpts from the 1958 Handbook on Women Workers (Bulletin 266) published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

About 95% of all employed women were working in non-agricultural industries in 1957, and almost 2/3 of these were engaged in the distribution of goods and services.

Manufacturing. — More than 1/5 of all employed women are working in manufacturing industries, and they constitute about 1/4 of all manufacturing employees. Their numbers include women working in factory offices, as well as production workers. The relative importance of these 2 groups varies considerably: in some of the primary metal industries, less than 1/2 of the women manufacturing employees have production jobs, while in the apparel and textile industries, more than 9/10 do.

Farm. — Of almost 7 million women living on farms in the U.S. in 1958, slightly over 1/4 (1.9 million) were in the labor force. About 37% of the women residing on farms were employed wholly or primarily in agriculture; the majority of women in this group were unpaid family workers.

Government. — 534,000 women are now working for the Federal government, the largest single employer in the nation. An all-time high of 321 women were in State legislatures in 1957 -- 33 in upper houses and 288 in lower houses. There was at least 1 woman in the legislature of every State except Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin.

Why Women Work

Whether or not a woman works outside the home depends on numerous economic and social factors. When a group of women workers were questioned by the Women's Bureau about why they were working, most of them gave financial reasons. Most of the married women workers were contributing to essential living expenses. Some were working to raise family living standards, and some were helping to send their children to college.

Rise in Average Age. — The importance of older women in the work force has increased considerably in the last 2 decades. In 1940, women 45 years of age and over equaled just 22% of all women workers; by April 1958, their proportion had almost doubled -- having jumped to 38% of the total. The average (median) age of all women workers rose from 26 years in 1900, to 32 years in 1940, and then to 40 years in 1958.

Variation in Labor Force Participation. — The extent of labor force participation is usually highest among younger women and drops somewhat among women age 25 to 34, many of whom leave the labor force because of homemaking responsibilities. Special studies indicate that the total number of women workers 35 years and over rose from less than 9 million in 1948 to almost 13 million in 1956. About 1/3 of the increase was in clerical jobs; 1/6 in service jobs (excl. private households), and another 1/6 in jobs as operatives in factories.

As women 35 years of age and over comprised 61% of all women workers in 1956, it is not surprising that they constituted a majority of the women workers in most occupational groups. The single exception were clerical workers, of whom 47% were 35 years and over.

Marital Status

The most remarkable change in women's participation in paid employment has occurred among married women (with husbands present). In 1940, 15% of these women

were at work; by 1957, the percentage had doubled. Because of their predominance in the population (nearly 2/3 of all women 14 years of age and over are married and living with their husbands), married women make up more than 1/2 of the woman labor force.

In 1940, married women (with husbands present) accounted for 30% of the female labor force; in 1950, almost 1/2; and in 1957, 54%. Of the 2.3 million married women whose husbands are absent from home, over 1/2 are in the labor force.

Working Wives. — A record number of working wives (11.5 million) accounted for 53% of all women in the labor force in March 1957. About 10.8 million of this number had husbands who were also in the labor force and together they amounted to 28% of all married couples (38.9 million) in the population. This represents a remarkable increase over 1940, when working couples numbered 3 million, or 11% of all married couples. By 1950, the group had increased to 8 million and their proportion to 22%.

More wives work when their husband's income is relatively low than when it is high. In March 1957, about 1/3 of the wives were working in those families where the husband's income was under $5,000; about 1/4, where it was between $6,000 and $7,000; and 1/8, where it was $10,000 and over. The highest proportion of working wives (2/5) was found among couples in which the husband was unemployed. Part-time employment was secured most frequently in families where the husband's annual income was very low (under $2,000) or very high ($10,000 or over). It is not surprising to find that there is relatively more part-time employment among wives in the high-income groups. But in the low-income groups, possible explanations may be that many of these wives have children to care for, are in poor health, or have reached an advanced age.

Working Mothers. — Of the 21½ million women in the labor force in March 1957, almost 7 million, or about 1/3, had children under 18 years of age. About 4½ million of these women had children of school age only (6 to 17 years); and the others, about 2½ million, had one or more children of preschool age (under 6 years). Most of the working mothers in 1957 were married women with husbands present, but about 1.3 million women were widowed, divorced, or separated from their husbands for other reasons.

Overall, about 1 of every 3 mothers with children under 18 years of age was working in 1957. Among mothers with school-age children only, about 2 out of 5 were working. For those with some preschool children, the ratio was about 1 out of 5. There is little doubt that most mothers prefer, when possible, to stay at home to take care of their young children. Once the children reach school age, however, the employment of mothers rises markedly.

4/10 of the mothers who are widowed, divorced, or separated are in the labor force, as compared with 3/10 of the mothers whose husbands are present. Of those having children under 6 years of age, 36% of the former group work, compared with 17% of the latter.

Part-Time Work

Part-time employment has characterized the work pattern of many women for a long time. Many women who are married and have children value part-time work as a way of supplementing or increasing their income, utilizing their skills and abilities, and providing outside interests and contacts. To their employers, part-time work has such advantages as furnishing needed aid during peak business load and relief periods.

During April 1958, almost 6½ million women -- about 30% of the women workers in non-agricultural industries -- were employed part-time (less than 35 hours a week). Women who are regular part-time workers equaled 22% of all nonfarm women workers.

(The End)

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PREJUDICE IN POLITICS

A recent Gallup poll revealed strong prejudices of voters. It was found that a white Protestant male is the least-controversial candidate:

Question: If your party nominated a well-qualified candidate for President, would you vote for him if he happened to be

	Answer: I would NOT vote for him:
a negro	53 %
a woman	43 %
a Jew	28 %
a Catholic	25 %
a Baptist	3 %

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DANGER -- DICTATORSHIP OVER EDUCATION !

Excerpt from "Declaration of Principles", adopted by the 103rd Convention of the Catholic Central Union of America, at Jefferson City, Mo.,Aug.2-6, 1958. Reprinted from Social Justice Review, Oct. 1958, p. 215.

Like millions of other Americans who, regardless of creed, view with understandable misgivings the present tendency of the public school to absorb the educational rights and prerogatives of both Church and family, the Catholic Central Union definitely implores this trend and adopts as its own the recent words of caution expressed by Most Rev. Bishop Robert Dwyer of Reno, Nevada, when he stated:

"It is pretty much of an open secret that what the educational Socialists would like to see, and see quickly, is the complete nationalization of all American education and educational agencies, so that the problem (of improving the public school system) could be handled with all the convenience and dexterity of a Federal Bureaucracy, i.e. with the money commandeered or channelled in the 'right direction.' Let us by no means underestimate these men, their power or their determination. There is little doubt that the present situation poses one of the gravest threats to American education in our entire experience. ... If the move for Federal control through financial dictatorship is successful, the real battle (fought by the educational bureaucrats) will have been won. ... The conversion of the American educational system into a monolithic dictatorship would mean the greatest single concentration of power, financial and ideological, in the nation and perhaps in the world."

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EDUCATION FOR LEADERSHIP

No one is worthy of the title of a cultivated man if he is blind to the moral, social, and political problems of our day. One will never point out as an example for others a man who may know Athens or Rome wonderfully well, but who does not succeed in seeing the difficulties in our societies today, who finds quite satisfactory certain naively simple solutions which show that he is ignorant of the very elements of the problem. Now education, in the way in which it is given, by the spirit which inspires it, can prepare for the understanding of the modern world or turn one from it. Without transforming a class into a course of political or economic science, it is possible to add to prejudices or to destroy them gradually.

He who has received a deeper, more refined culture does not receive it for himself alone. He should spread it, use it to raise the cultural level of the mass in which he lives. This idea of culture seemed very foreign to classical antiquity. In its eyes, the cultivated man was the one in whom humanity attained its goal. For us, one lifts himself above the mass only in order to uplift it in turn.

Yves de Montcheuil, For Men of Action, Fides, p. 122.

IMPORTANT NEW BOOKS

The following 3 books are highly recommended to readers of SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST:

PAROCHIAL SCHOOL - A Sociological Study, by Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., University of Notre Dame Press, Dec. 1958, 495 pp., $6.00.

This book by the distinguished chairman of the Department of Sociology at Loyola University, New Orleans, is a scientific achievement of the first magnitude. It is a report of a year-long study made by a team of sociologists working under the author's direction, under the auspices of the Department of Sociology of the University of Notre Dame.

Many segments of elementary school life, both parochial and public, have been studied, but never before had there been a total scientific study of a school as a social unit. An interesting variety of data, gathered from 632 pupils and 14 teachers through interviews, tests, observations and questionaires, are described. The behavior of individuals and groups is interpreted in the classrooms and playgrounds, in religious and recreational activities, in the various adult groups, and in committees connected with the school. This report is unique in that it provides a two-way comparison: throughout the study the William Howard Taft public school served as a control group with St. Luke's parochial school. Another comparison is that between St.Luke's and a large number of other parochial schools of America.

The book is easy to read and highly interesting, especially if you are a parent, are going to be a parent, or know others who are parents.

AMERICAN CATHOLIC DILEMMA, by Thomas F. O'Dea, Assoc.Professor of Sociology at Fordham University, New York; with an Introduction by Gustave Weigel, S.J., Sheed & Ward, 1958, $3.00.

For several years American Catholics have been debating the Catholic contribution to the intellectual life of America. Such self-criticism is healthy. While recognizing that progress is being made, Professor O'Dea forthrightly sides with those who feel that there are still serious shortcomings in the American Catholic approach to the intellectual life, and that these shortcomings must be realistically examined. Such a book reminds us that a group's capacity for self-examination is a sign of maturity.

WORLD CRISIS AND THE CATHOLIC. Studies published on the occasion of the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate. Sheed & Ward, $3.00.

The world crisis of today is made up of many different crises, each of which is a cause of anguish and cries out for a solution. There is the crisis presented by the development of technology in our atomic age, the political crisis occasioned by the need for forging a world community, the economic crisis shown by the struggle of a billion people in under-developed countries, and there is the religious crisis, the struggle against secularism and indifference. This book examines these crises and gives positive responses to them. It is written by lay people who have made distinguished contributions to their own fields, who know the great problems of the modern world because they live among them daily. Among the 20 contributors are such diverse personalities as Konrad Adenauer and Giorgio la Pira, Ann Blyth and Bruce Marshall, John Wu and Christopher Dawson.

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COMING EVENTS:

You will soon read in SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST

* The Trend Toward a White-Collar Society (February)
* The Welfare State (February)
* Family Income in the U.S.